NUMB. LXXXV.

The SPECTATOR.

Interdum ſpecioſa locis, morataque rectè
Fabula nullius Veneris, ſine pondere & Arte,
Valdiùs oblectat populum, meliuſque moratur,
Quàm verſus inopes rerum, nugæq; canoræ. Hor.

Thurſday, June 7. 1711.

It is the Cuſtom of the *Mahometans*, if they ſee any printed or written Paper upon the Ground, to take it up and lay it aſide carefully, as not knowing but it may contain ſome Piece of their *Alcoran*. I muſt confeſs I have ſo much of the *Muſſulman* in me, that I cannot forbear looking into every Printed Paper which comes in my way, under whatſoever deſpicable Circumſtances it may appear; for as no Mortal Author, in the ordinary Fate and Viciſſitude of Things, knows to what uſe his Works may, ſome time or other, be applied, a Man may oftentimes meet with very celebrated Names in a Paper of Tobacco. I have lighted my Pipe more than once with the Writings of a Prelate, and know a Friend of mine who, for theſe ſeveral Years, has converted the Eſſays of a Man of Quality into a kind of Fringe for his Candleſticks. I remember, in particular, after having read over a Poem of an Eminent Author on a Victory, I met with ſeveral Fragments of it upon the next Rejoycing-day, which had been employed in Squibs and Crackers, and by that means celebrated its Subject in a double Capacity. I once met with a Page of Mr. *Baxter* under a *Chriſtmas* Pye. Whether or no the Paſtry-Cook had made uſe of it through Chance, or Waggery, for the defence of that Superſtitious *Viande*, I know not; but, upon the Peruſal of it, I conceived ſo good an Idea of the Author's Piety, that I bought the whole Book. I have often very much profited by theſe accidental Readings, and have ſometimes found very Curious Pieces that are either out of Print, or not to be met with in the Shops of our *London* Book-ſellers. For this Reaſon, when my Friends take a Survey of my Library, they are very much ſurpriſed to ſee, upon the Shelf of Folio's, two long Band-boxes ſtanding upright among my Books, till I let them ſee that they are both of them lined with deep Erudition and abſtruſe Literature. I might likewiſe mention a Paper Kite, from which I have received great Improvement; and a Hat-Caſe, which I would not exchange for all the Beavers in *Great Britain*. This my inquiſitive Temper, or rather impertinent Humour of prying into all ſorts of Writing, with my natural Averſion to Loquacity, give me a good deal of Employment when I enter any Houſe in the Country; for I can't, for my Heart, leave a Room before I have thoroughly ſtudied the Walls of it, and examined the ſeveral printed Papers which are uſually paſted upon them. The laſt Piece that I met with upon this Occaſion, gave me a moſt exquiſite Pleaſure. My Reader will think I am not ſerious, when I acquaint him that the Piece I am going to ſpeak of was the old Ballad of the *Two Children in the Wood*, which is one of the Darling Songs of the Common People, and has been the Delight of moſt *Engliſhmen* in ſome Part of their Age.

This Song is a plain ſimple Copy of Nature, deſtitute of all the Helps and Ornaments of Art. The Tale of it is a pretty Tragical Story, and therefore pleaſes for no other Reaſon, but becauſe it is a Copy of Nature. There is even a deſpicable Simplicity in the Verſe; and yet, becauſe the Sentiments are natural and unaffected, they are able to move the Mind of the moſt polite Reader with inward Meltings of Humanity and Compaſſion. The Incidents grow out of the Subject, and are ſuch as *Virgil* himſelf would have touched upon, had the like Story been told by that Divine Poet. For which Reaſon the whole Narration has ſomething in it very moving; notwithſtanding the Author of it (whoever he was) has delivered it in ſuch an abject Phraſe, and poorneſs of Expreſſion, that the quoting any part of it would

would look like a Deſign of turning it into Ridicule. But though the Language is mean, the Thoughts from one end to the other are wonderfully natural, and therefore cannot fail to pleaſe thoſe who are not Judges of Language, or thoſe who notwithſtanding they are Judges of Language, have a genuine and unprejudiced Taſte of Nature. The Condition, Speech and Behaviour of the dying Parents, with the Age, Innocence and Diſtreſs of the Children, are ſet forth in ſuch tender Circumſtances, that it is impoſſible for a good-natured Reader not to be affected with them. As for the Circumſtance of the *Robin-red-breaſt*, it is indeed a little Poetical Ornament; and to ſhow what a Genius the Author was Maſter of amidſt all his Simplicity, it is juſt the ſame kind of Fiction which one of the greateſt of the *Latin* Poets has made uſe of upon a Parallel Occaſion; I mean that Paſſage in *Horace*, where he deſcribes himſelf when he was a Child, fallen aſleep in a Deſart Wood, and covered with Leaves by the Turtles that took pity on him.

Me fabuloſæ Vulture in Appulo,
Altricis extra limen Apuliæ
Ludo fatigatumq; ſomno
Fronde novâ puerum palumbes
Texere———

I have heard that the late Lord DORSET, who had the greateſt Wit tempered with the greateſt Humanity, and was one of the fineſt Criticks as well as the beſt Poets of his Age, had a numerous Collection of old *Engliſh* Ballads, and took a particular Pleaſure in the Reading of them. I can affirm the ſame of Mr. DRYDEN, and know ſeveral of the moſt refined Writers of our preſent Age, who are of the ſame Humour.

I might likewiſe refer my Reader to *Moliere*'s Thoughts on this Subject, as he has expreſſed them in the Character of the *Miſanthrope*; but thoſe only who are endowed with a true Greatneſs of Soul and Genius, can diveſt themſelves of the little Images of Ridicule, and admire Nature in her Simplicity and Nakedneſs. As for the little conceited Wits of the Age, who can only ſhow their Judgment by finding Fault, they cannot be ſuppoſed to admire theſe Productions, that have nothing to recommend them but the Beauties of Nature, when they do not know how to reliſh even thoſe Compoſitions that, with all the Beauties of Nature, have alſo the additional Advantages of Art.

Compleat Setts of this Paper, for the Month of May, are to be ſold by Mr. Graves in St. James's Street; Mr. Lewis under Tom's Coffee-Houſe, Covent-Garden; Mr. Lillie, Perfumer, the Corner of Beaufort-Buildings; Mr. Sanger at the Temple Gate; Mr. Lloyd near the Church in the Temple; Mr. Knapton in St. Paul's Church-Yard; Mr. Round in Exchange Ally, and Mrs. Baldwin in Warwick-lane, where alſo may be had thoſe for the Months of March and April.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

At the Deſire of ſeveral Ladies of Quality.
For the Benefit of the Box-keepers.
By Her Majeſty's Company of Comedians.

AT the Theatre Royal in Drury-lane, this preſent Thurſday, being the 7th of June, will be preſented a Comedy called, The Royal Merchant; or, Beggars Bush. The part of the Merchant to be perform'd by Mr. Wilks, Clauſe by Mr. Keene, Wouter by Mr. Booth, Hubert by Mr. Mills, Vandunck by Mr. Bullock, Orator Higgin by Mrs Eſtcourt, Prince Prigsby by Mr. Norris, Bertha by Mrs. Bradſhaw; and all the other parts to the beſt Advantage.

This Play is ſold by Jacob Tonſon at Shakeſpear's Head over against Catherine-ſtreet in the Strand.

This Day is Publiſh'd,

A very Neat and Correct Edition of the Works of Mr. Francis Beaumont and Mr. John Fletcher. In Seven Vols. Adorn'd with Cuts. With ſome Account of the Life and Writings of the Authors. Printed for J. Tonſon, at Shakeſpear's Head over against Catherine-ſtreet in the Strand.

A Curious Collection of Italian Paintings, (of Giulio Romano, Guido Reni, Albano, Alexander Veroneſe, Guercino Baſſan, Tintoret, Benedetto Caſtiglione, Michael Angelo delle Battaglie, Salvator Roſa, Luca Jordano, Bernaſchi, Claude Lorain, Gaſper Pouſſin, Franceſco Bologneſe, and Viviano, alſo of Rubens, Baptiſta Bourdon, Le Brun, Holbein, Berghem, Brouwer, Schalken, Teniers, and a very Capital Piece of Gerard Dou) lately brought from b yond Sea; Will be Sold by Auction on this Day the 7th inſtant, at the Two Flower Pots in Somerſet Houſe Yard: Where Catalogues may be had, and the Pictures view'd till the time of Sale.

To be Sold, at a lower Rate than ordinary, at the Queen's Head, joining to the Church Gate in Bedford ſtreet, Covent-Garden, all Sorts of Druggets, Hair and Worſted Camlets, Shagdad Duroys, Shagreens, Shalloons, Durants, Padua Serges, Shags, Serges de Nifmes, Calamancoes, and all other Goods fit for Mens Apparel. The Perſons who now keep the Shop deſigning to leave off the Trade, and the Houſe and Shop to be Lett at Michaelmas next.

An Incomparable pleaſant Tincture to reſtore the Senſe of Smelling, tho' loſt for many Years. A few Drops of which being ſnuff'd up the Noſe, infallibly Cures thoſe who have loſt their Smell, let it proceed from what Cauſe ſoever; it admirably opens in a manner of Obſtructions of the Olfactory, or Smelling Nerves, comforts and ſtrengthens the Head and Brain, and revives the Smelling Faculty to a Miracle, effectually removing whatever is the Cauſe of the Diſorder of that Senſe, and perfectly Cures, ſo as to enable the Perſon to ſmell as quick and well, as any one in the World. Price 2 s. 6 d. a Bottle. Sold only at Mr. Payne's Toyſhop at the Angel and Crown in St. Paul's Church Yard near Cheapſide with Directions.

A Lady's Riding Suit Compleat, being a Blue Cambler Coat, Waſtecoat, and Petticoat, laced with Silver, alſo an Hat and Feather, to be Sold at Mr. Harford's at the Acorn in York-ſtreet, Covent Garden.

Juſt Publiſh'd, the Fifth Edition, with Additions, of

An eaſie and ſafe Method for Curing the King's-Evil; with ſeveral Obſervations, which may be of Uſe and Service to People afflicted with that Diſtemper. To which is added, a Specimen of Succeſs, in a faithful Relation of many extraordinary Cures on Men, Women and Children. By William Vickers, M. A. Printed for S. Manſhip, at the Ship againſt the Royal-Exchange; and A. Collins at the Black Boy againſt St. Dunſtan's Church, Fleetſtreet. Pr. 6 d.

Juſt Publiſh'd,

An Account of the preſent State and Government of the Empire of Germany: In a Letter to Thomas Foley of Whitley in the County of Worceſter, Eſq; by M. Le Veſſor. Printed for Jacob Tonſon at Shakeſpear's Head over againſt Catherine-ſtreet in the Strand.

Juſt Publiſhed, and Printed very Correctly, with a new Elzever Letter, in 12 mo. for the Pocket,

Paradiſe Loſt, a Poem in twelve Books, written by Mr. John Milton. The Ninth Edition, adorn'd with Sculptures. Printed for Jacob Tonſon at Shakeſpear's Head over-againſt Catherine-ſtreet in the Strand.

LONDON: Printed for *Sam. Buckley*, at the *Dolphin* in *Little-Britain*; and Sold by *A. Baldwin* in *Warwick-Lane*; where Advertiſements are taken in, as alſo by *Charles Lillie*, Perfumer, at the Corner of *Beauford-Buildings* in the *Strand*.